

GOLF PUTTER AND TRAINING APPARATUS AND METHOD

Field of the Invention

This invention relates a golf putter and a golf putting training apparatus which resides at a first end proximal and in contact with the golfer's neck with the putting swing correctly completed when the apparatus first end continues proximal and in contact with the neck at the conclusion of the swing. The invention, more particularly demonstrates an incorrect swing when the apparatus first end swings away from the neck toward the golfer's shoulder as the swing concludes.

Background of the Invention

Different putter structures and methods are shown in the prior art. Included are the following U. S. Patents: 5,209,474 to Voyer; 5,342,055 to Diley; 5,529,306 to Staats et al.; 5,893,803 to Leadbetter et al.; 6,595,865 to Stitz; 5,465,971 to Tischler; 5,520,392 to Foresi et al.; 5,649,870 to Harrison; 6,572,486 to Sweinhart; 6,533,676 to D'Angelo et al.; 6,491,591 to Schuster; 6,350,207 to Arcuri; 5,665,007 to Tatum; 5,584,768 to Lee; and 4,461,479 to Mitchell.

The patents referred to herein are provided herewith in an Information Disclosure Statement in accordance with 37 CFR 1.97.

Summary of the Invention

Prior art reveal many golf putters including the "long putter" and putters with a handle portion residing in the arm pit, stomach or chest during the putting swing. The putter and putter training apparatus disclosed herein is a "neck putter" used such that the putter shaft, distal from the putter head, remains gently pressed against the golfer's neck during the execution of a proper putting stroke. The position of the putter shaft, distal from the golf club head, gives immediate feedback to the golfer on performing the "correct" and "incorrect" putting stroke before the ball is struck. Movement of the putter shaft, distal from the putter head and proximal and gently

1 pressed against the golfer's neck, away from the neck and toward the shoulder signals  
2 the golfer that the golfer's wrists have improperly broken resulting in the putter shaft  
3 falling away from the neck, or in falling off the neck during the putting stroke. The  
4 golfer be trained, by use of the putter and or the putting training apparatus to stop  
5 making an "incorrect" putting stroke, which results in a bad putt, and to make a  
6 "correct" stroke.

7 The "neck putter" is longer than the "long putter" expected to be in the 60" to  
8 72" length range. The training apparatus, the preferred embodiment of the invention,  
9 is an alternate to the putter and is used for training in addition to the putter. The  
10 training apparatus is an attachment, generally measuring approximately 36" in length,  
11 which, in the preferred embodiment is received at the grip clip means by an existing  
12 putter shaft, slipped up the shaft such that the grip clip means is affixed by a friction  
13 fit at the golf putter grip. Alternative means to the grip clip means illustrated will be  
14 recognized by those of ordinary skills in the attaching and affixing arts for the  
15 temporary attachment of the training apparatus at the putter grip by connecting the  
16 grip clip or connecting means to a putter primarily at the putter grip.

17 The "neck putter" and training apparatus train the golfer to perform a more  
18 effective putting stroke achieved from muscle memory accomplished through  
19 repetition. Additionally, the "neck putter" principle is defined by keeping the putter  
20 pressed gently against the neck at all times during application of the putting stroke.  
21 This provides the user with an effective tool for enhancing the Stability, Tempo, and  
22 Pace (STP) required for an overall improved putting stroke.

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#### 24 Brief Description of the Drawings

25 The foregoing and other features and advantages of the present invention will  
26 become more readily appreciated as the same become better understood by reference  
27 to the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment of the invention  
28 when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

29 Fig. 1 is a perspective drawing showing the golf apparatus and golf putter in  
30 combination where the apparatus first end is in contact with the golfer's neck and the  
grip clip means (40) is affixed by affixing means at the golf putter grip.



1 shaft first end (20), the counter weight (22), the apparatus upper shaft second end  
2 (30), grip clip means (40) with hinge means (42). Seen at the grip clip means (40) is  
3 the grip clip first end (50) having a grip clip first end dimension D1 (52), a grip clip  
4 second end (60) having a grip clip second end dimension D2 (62) and a grip clip slot  
5 (65) having a grip clip slot dimension D5 (66). Seen in figures 1, 5 and 10 is a golf  
6 putter (70) having a golf putter shaft (72), a golf putter first end (80), a golf putter  
7 second end (90) and a golf putter head (100). The golf putter shaft (72) has a putter  
8 shaft dimension D3 (54).

9       The preferred embodiment of the invention is the training apparatus and golf  
10 putter (1) comprising an apparatus (5) having an apparatus upper shaft (10). The  
11 apparatus upper shaft (10) having an apparatus upper shaft first end (20) and an  
12 apparatus upper shaft second end (30). Grip clip means (40) affixed to the apparatus  
13 upper shaft (10) at the apparatus upper shaft second end (30) by hinge means (42). A  
14 golf putter (70) having a golf putter lower shaft (72). The golf putter (70) having a  
15 golf putter lower shaft first end (80) and a golf putter lower shaft second end (90). A  
16 golf putter head (100) affixed by golf club head affixing means at the golf putter  
17 lower shaft second end (90). A golf putter grip (75) is received at the golf putter  
18 lower shaft first end (80). The golf putter grip (75) having a dimension D4 (64)  
19 greater than a putter lower shaft (72) dimension D3 (54). Dimensions are generally  
20 inside or outside diameters where the structures are generally tubular and circular in  
21 cross section. However, where not circular in cross section and where the structure is  
22 tubular, the dimension(s) will interrelate in illustrating the movement of the grip clip  
23 (40), generally tubular in structure, from a lower portion of the golf putter lower shaft  
24 (72) toward and in contact with the golf putter grip (75). It will be recognized that  
25 golf club tubular shafts are generally tapered from a smaller outside diameter  
26 proximal the golf club head to a greater outside diameter proximal the golf club grip  
27 (75) and that the golf club grip (75) will generally have a greater outside diameter or  
28 dimension, where not circular in cross section, than the golf putter lower shaft (72).

29       The apparatus upper shaft (10), golf putter lower shaft and golf putter grip  
30 (75) are generally tubular having a variety of cross sections. The grip clip means (40)  
generally comprises a tubular member means (42) having a grip clip first end (50)

1 and a grip clip second end (60). The tubular member means (42) having a hinge  
2 means (42) affixed by hinge affixing means intermediate the grip clip first end (50)  
3 and the grip clip second end (60) at the tubular member means wall (43) at the outer  
4 surface (44). The hinge means (42) affixed by hinge affixing means at the apparatus  
5 second end (30) providing hinge interaction between the apparatus shaft (10) and the  
6 grip clip means (40). Hinge affixing means may be by formation of hinge leaves via  
7 injection molding or metal formation from rigid materials including plastics, metals  
8 and other equivalent materials; hinge means regarding the rotation of one hinge leaf  
9 relative to another hinge leaf may be by a bolt received via apertures in the hinge leaf  
10 aligned with apertures in the apparatus upper shaft (10) proximal the apparatus  
11 second end (30) and secured by a nut or by a leaf structure formed in a generally  
12 tubular form which is received by the apparatus second end (30) and which has hinge  
13 interconnection means relative to a second leaf structure illustrated here generally as  
14 a grip clip (40). Shaft means, in all embodiments, are generally a rigid material,  
15 tubular in structure formed from plastics, composite materials, metals and other  
16 equivalent materials.

17 A grip clip slot (65) in the wall (43) from the grip clip first end (20) to the  
18 grip clip second end (30) wherein the slot (65) has a grip clip slot dimension D5 (66)  
19 which is greater than a putter shaft dimension D3 (54) and which is sized to receive a  
20 golf putter shaft (72) intermediate the golf putter head (100) and the golf putter grip  
21 (75). The grip clip slot dimension D5 (66) has a dimension less than the dimension  
22 of the golf putter grip dimension D4 (64). The grip clip first end dimension D1 (52)  
23 is less than the grip clip second end dimension D2 (62). The grip clip first end  
24 dimension D1 (52) and the grip clip second end dimension D2 (62) is sized to receive  
25 the golf putter grip (75) and to be affixed by grip affixing means at the golf putter  
26 grip (75). The grip affixing means to affix the grip clip means (40) includes friction  
27 fitting by the fact of the grip clip first end dimension D1 (52) being less than the grip  
28 clip second end dimension D2 (62) and the golf putter grip dimension D4 (64),  
29 proximal the apparatus first end (20) being greater than the grip clip second end  
30 dimension D2 (62). The grip affixing means to affix the grip clip means (40) also  
includes other forms of gripping including a spring secured clam shell structure

1 allowing the grip clip means (40) to be opened to allow the grip clip slot (65) to  
2 receive a golf putter grip (75). Other similar friction affixing, clamp affixing  
3 structures and other strictures will be viewed by those of ordinary skill in the art as  
4 equivalent. The apparatus (5) at the grip clip slot (65) will receive either the  
5 apparatus shaft (10) to slide up the apparatus shaft (10) toward the apparatus first end  
6 (20) and receive and be affixed at the golf putter grip (75) or the grip clip slot (65)  
7 will receive the golf putter grip (75) and be affixed by affixing means for use in  
8 putting. The apparatus (5) at the apparatus first end (20) will be placed by the golfer  
9 against the golfer's neck (21). The golfer will detect the position of the apparatus  
10 first end (20) relative to the golfer's neck (21) and when sensing that the apparatus  
11 first end (20) has moved away from the neck (21) and toward the golfer's shoulder  
12 (22) will realize that the golf stroke has been incorrectly executed. In the alternative,  
13 the golfer, in realizing that the apparatus first end (20) has remained in contact with  
14 the golfer's neck (21) throughout the putting stroke, will realize that the golf stroke  
15 has been correctly executed.

16 An embodiment of the invention is a neck putter (200) having an upper putter  
17 shaft (205) having an upper putter shaft terminus (206) and a lower putter shaft (207).  
18 The upper putter shaft (205) and lower putter shaft (207) are, in the preferred  
19 embodiment, comprised of tubular means but may be comprised of shaft means  
20 including plastics, composite materials, metals and other shaft materials recognized  
21 by those of ordinary skills in the golfing arts regarding golf shafts. The upper putter  
22 shaft (205) has an upper putter shaft first end (210) and an upper putter shaft second  
23 end (211). The lower putter shaft (207) has a lower putter shaft first end (212) and a  
24 lower putter shaft second end (220). A neck putter head (240) is affixed by golf  
25 putter and golf head affixing means at the lower putter shaft second end (220). The  
26 neck upper putter shaft first end (210) is distal from the upper putter shaft second end  
27 (211). A neck putter grip (230) means, generally tubular, is received by the upper  
28 putter shaft (205) at the upper putter shaft second end (211) and by the lower putter  
29 shaft (207) at the lower putter shaft first end (212). A neck putter second grip (235)  
30 means may be received by the upper putter shaft (205) intermediate the upper putter  
shaft first end (210) and the putter grip (230). Grip means (230) and (235) comprises

1 a covering, generally tubular, or surface which is grasped by the golfer in operating  
2 the putter and in performing the golf stroke and may be composed of plastic, leather,  
3 foams and other materials commonly used in forming golf club grips.

4 The lower shaft (207) may be formed in two pieces comprising a lower shaft  
5 upper portion (208) and a lower shaft lower portion (209) for the purpose of allowing  
6 the lower putter shaft (207) to be adjusted in length by the lower shaft upper portion  
7 (208) to be received into or to receive the lower shaft lower portion (209) to allow  
8 adjustment of the length of the lower shaft (207) by use of a neck putter shaft length  
9 adjustment means (250). Neck putter lower shaft length adjustment means (250) may  
10 be comprised of allen screw asserting force from the lower shaft upper portion (208)  
11 against the lower shaft lower portion (209), a screw coupling received by threaded  
12 means at the lower shaft upper portion terminus (206) or the lower putter shaft (207)  
13 distal from the neck putter second end (220) which compresses either the lower shaft  
14 upper portion (208) proximal the lower shaft upper portion terminus (206) or the  
15 lower shaft lower portion (209) against the other. Other putter shaft length  
16 adjustment means (250) will be recognized by those of ordinary skills in the affixing  
17 arts to be the equivalent to those recited.

18 It will be recognized that rules of golf club construction will be observed  
19 including, but not limited to, the angle of presentation between the golf putter head  
20 and the lower putter shaft (207) and that the moveable portions of the indicated  
21 structure including the putter shaft length adjustment means (250) will be fixed by a  
22 means which will make adjustment during play difficult. The neck putter second  
23 grip (235) is provided to allow the golfer an alternative means of holding the neck  
24 putter during the putter stroke. The neck putter (200) is adjusted to a length such that  
25 the upper putter shaft (205) proximal the neck putter first end (210) will be positioned  
26 proximal to and touching the golfer's neck during the putting stroke. A counter  
27 weight (202) may form or be placed within the upper putter shaft (205) proximal the  
28 neck putter first end (210).

29 While a preferred embodiment of the present invention has been shown and  
30 described, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that many changes and  
modifications may be made without departing from the invention in its broader

1 aspects.' The appended claims are therefore intended to cover all such changes and  
2 modifications as fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

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